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ABSTRACT

In the future, as societies become more technologically demanding and families find less time for socializing their young, the power of the early childhood educator (ECE) will grow. The role must be professionalized. First and foremost, child development knowledge must be the foundation of ECE expertise. Within the curriculum, the building of prosocial skills and attitudes needs to become a primary goal of teacher training. Teachers-in-training will need courses in children's emotional and personal development and how these affect early learning, as well as some specialized intimate topics such as the intergenerational transmission of secure and insecure attachment patterns of young children with their caregivers. Parenting courses and practica with families, especially families under stress, will provide hands-on experience for teachers in training. Teachers in training must be challenged to grasp the implications of theoretical ideas. Knowledge about the subtle relationship between the domains of language and cognition is important, as well as an appreciation for dance, classical music, poetic rhythms, and painting. Finally, coursework on differences in cultural patterns of child rearing and in treatment of children as a function of gender will empower teachers to become more aware of ethnic and gender differences and similarities. Contains 32 references. (EAJ)

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# TRAINING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS FOR THE FUTURE

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Running head: ECE training for the future

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## Abstract

This presentation focuses on future needs and ideas for training early childhood educators. Current emphases on cognitive preparation for success in schools and on developmentally appropriate practices with young children sometimes give short shrift to the importance of new ways of conceptualizing teacher education so that those who dedicate themselves to preparing young children for the next century will be more confidently prepared to do so. Nurturing teachers are wise in the ways of young children, thoroughly conversant with child development theories and knowledge, reflective and observant of the special nature and needs of each child. Creative trainers will help teachers of the future become skilled not only at classroom organization and management, but also adept at individualizing the curriculum, depending on each child's personal style, gifts, and interests, as well as flexible in working with families.

## Training Early Childhood Educators for the Future

Child development research reveals the powerful and positive effect on children's learning careers when perceptive, responsively attuned parents apply their skills and encouragements daily in rearing and teaching young children. Yet few societies have made strong attempts to professionalize wholeheartedly the work of classroom caregivers of preschoolers and kindergartners.

As the number of dual career families and single parents increases, early childhood educators of the future will have to work ever more closely in harmony with families. Together as a team, their goals must be to assist the youngest citizens of the world set a firm foundation for achieving:

. cooperative, prosocial, and peaceful ways of living together

. zestful and boundless curiosity for knowledge

. a genuine persistent passion for learning

. language powers for eloquence and logical reasoning

. an internal drive to work purposefully, but not anxiously or compulsively, toward competence and excellence

. secure loving attachments with significant caregivers

. emotional resilience and flexibility to manage frustration or failure

. aesthetic appreciation of poetry, art, dance, and music

. playfulness and a sense of joy and good humor

. motoric grace and skills

. confidence to tackle increasingly more complex tasks

. planfulness based on reflectivity about actions and feelings of self and others

Note that these goals, so necessary for functioning in a complex society in the future, reflect children's emotional well being as well as cognitive competencies. They do not focus on any one specific body of knowledge to be learned. Let us compare these goals with those of past pioneers in early childhood education.

Froebel. The initial goals of Froebel, the founder of the first kindergarten in 1837, were:

> to train children in habits of cleanliness and neatness, courtesy, punctuality, and deference toward others. He also emphasized language, numbers, forms, and eye-hand coordination...Froebel believed the child should develop impulses which came from within. The role of the teacher was to...guide the child as these impulses developed. He emphasized allowing children to choose activities of interest to them. (Osborn, 1991, p. 44)

Froebel's strong belief in the importance of the kindergarten had a deeply religious foundation. He spent years working for young children, perfecting his concept of "gifts and occupations" - perceptually and physically appropriate toys and activities representing symbolic ideas in concrete forms.

Montessori. In founding the Casa dei Bambini (Children's House) in 1907, Maria

Montessori expressed her belief that children should be allowed "the freedom to develop an inner understanding, awareness, and confidence through concrete experiences and manipulations. The joy of learning, the discovery process, peace, harmony, and cooperation are basic concepts" inherent in her conceptualization of early childhood programs and in her design of early childhood materials and methods (Osborn, 1991, p. 107).

Thus, these early education pioneers seem to have had a benign vision of young children as natural learners, who would flourish in the educational sunshine provided by teachers in the form of well- presented and well- thought- out materials of intrinsic interest. Yet given the technological complexity expected by the 21st century, given the pressures on families, and given the special needs of children for emotional sustenance as well as intellectual guidance, judicious provision of attractive materials in a pleasant environment may not be enough as the main task of an early childhood teacher.

## Early Childhood Educators Must Be Professionally Trained

In the future as societies become more technologically demanding and families find less time for socializing their young, the power of the early childhood educator will grow. The role must be professionalized. No longer can societies assumed that any young uneducated person (usually female) or someone who has parented, is ipso facto completely qualified to nurture young children to grow into superb and persistent learners and empathic, socially skilled citizens. It is true that some caregivers are far

more gifted to tune into young children than are others. Some adults and some young people are gifted in their sensitivity for soothing. They are responsively alert to children's body language, the tell tale signs that a child may be ill, or experiencing troubles in the family, or feeling rejected by a cherished playmate, or tense and scared because new lessons seem too bewildering to tackle. Gifted teachers tune in to individual children. They adjust their responses and techniques of teaching to meet the emotional needs of the children they serve. But even gifted adults need the insights, the knowledge, the practice that professional training can provide!

For excellence in future preparation, first we look to past theoretical and pragmatic giants in the field. We must also look beyond the confines of what education courses consist of today in many institutions. This paper will address the question: How shall the early childhood specialist of the <u>future</u> be trained? What constitutes a splendid preparation for this work?

First and foremost, **child development knowledge** must be the foundation of early childhood education (ECE) expertise. Of course the ECE specialist must know methods and materials, know how to set up early childhood environments and learning centers that promote camaraderie, peacefulness, and leisurely opportunities for in-depth autonomous exploration of materials and peer relationships. Teachers need information about how to order and use unit blocks, finger painting paper, and other educational materials as well as books appropriate for reading with young children. But such knowledge is not sufficient. The ECE expert must be deeply

knowledgeable about how children develop, function, and thrive. Caregivers must know how to carry out interpersonal interactions and "scaffold" early learning, to use Bruner's (1966) felicitous term. He trenchantly observed that the goal of the teacher is to create an independent learner.

> Instruction is a provisional state that has as its object to make the learner or problem solver self-sufficient. The tutor must correct the learner in a fashion that eventually makes it possible for the learner to take over the corrective function himself. Otherwise the result of instruction is to create a form of mastery that is contingent upon the perpetual presence of a teacher. (p.53)

In some communities, rote learning and teacher-dominated education is an ages-old accepted method. It will surely take much patience and good will to help some communities rethink the role of teachers to prepare children for success in the future.

In the present century, while rethinking the teacher role, some educators have swung too far on the pendulum. Sensitized to the pitfalls of teacher-dominated learning, they insist that the role of the teacher is rather to be primarily an observer of children's ways of interacting with materials to create their own understandings. Jean Piaget posited four bases that determine children's learning: genetics, physical experience and concrete manipulations, social experience (with peers and adults), and equilibration as a balance between assimilating familiar ideas and accommodating to new ones (Ginsburg & Opper, 1969) . However, some followers of Piaget interpreted his ideas so rigidly that they relegated teacher-led learning to a low status. Rather,

they conceptualized the teacher role only as a facilitator. Teachers were to provide materials so that children through the equilibration process of trying new ideas, failing, and retrying other ways to solve their problems, create their own "new schemas" and advance their understandings and their learning at their own pace. Teachers were to encourage children's thinking out loud so that they can discover science, math, logic, or social interaction principles.

Thus, the concept of teacher as intrusive and controlling contrasts with teacher as an observer and arranger of materials. Will either of these concepts serve us well as future role models for early childhood teachers? What conceptualization of the role of the early childhood educator will best help train teachers for the 21st century?

## Coursework to Prepare Early Childhood Professionals for the Future

Aside from basic courses in curricular methods and materials which are currently in place for teachers (see Dodge, 1996), courses in the following areas are likely to be of great usefulness in preparing teachers for the future:

### Prosocial Development

Early childhood teachers must become prosocial educators par excellence! The building of prosocial skills and attitudes needs to become a **primary** goal of teacher training in the future. Teachers would do well to adopt Kobak's (1979) ideal of promoting each child's CQ (Caring Quotient) in the classroom as well as children's IQ.

Teacher training needs to include ideas on how the teacher can help children

who are shy, isolate, bossy, or angry find harmonious ways to gain group entry, and to learn the deep satisfactions of intimacy and busy togetherness in peer play. Smilansky's **sociodramatic play facilitation** techniques are an excellent tool to enhance teacher sensitivity to the value of rich dramatic group play for increasing representational skills (Smilansky & Sheftaya, 1990). Emphasis should be placed on prosocial curricula that include families and community resource people.

In order to advance children's intellectual development, wise early childhood educators have always known that play and emotional nurturing form the optimal foundation for and prerequisite opportunities for cognitive growth. Positive motivation and affective commitment are basic to a child's ability to devote emotional energy to intellectual tasks. A caring, cooperative classroom is the basic foundation for cognitive accomplishments. Teachers will need to emphasize vigorously the development of prosocial behaviors, attitudes, and specific interpersonal skills (Cartledge & Milburn,1980).

Examples of school-wide implementation of such programs are available in Honig & Wittmer's annotated bibliography of prosocial materials (1992). Three experimental schools in the San Francisco Bay area (Brown & Solomon, 1983), over a seven year period, implemented the following program components:

1. The entire elementary school recognizes and rewards caring, helping, responsibility, and other prosocial behaviors whether they occur at school or at home.

2. Adults provide empathy training so that children see examples of animals or

children in distress, either in real life or in staged episodes, so that they can hear adults comment on how to help someone in trouble. Children regularly role-play situations where persons are in need of help in order that the children experience the role of "victim" and of "helper".

3. Children help at home with chores; and in school, older children are involved in helping younger ones.

4. Community "mentors" who are active in prosocial roles visit classrooms and describe their experiences.

5. Teachers involve children in structured programs of helpful activities, such as visiting shut-ins, making toys for other children who have none, visiting the elderly, cleaning up or gardening in nearby parks and playgrounds.

6. Teachers involve parents and the community deeply in school efforts so that a climate of caring is supported in all aspects of the children's lives.

Many materials exist to assist ECE personnel in creating caring classrooms. Charney (1992) gives superb examples of teaching children to care through a multitude of techniques including "guided discovery", "natural consequences", discussions, and teacher encouragement through attending more to the how than the what of each child activity. "I want to let the children know that I am interested and that I see their positive efforts" (p 27). His Social Curriculum includes opportunities for children to get to know one another well and to be noticed and heard and named. Teachers provide opportunities for children to participate in cooperative group

activities that encourage positive interdependence. Teachers ask Socratic questions and offer stem " If-then " statements that impel a child to think of ways to assert needs, resolve conflicts, and make friends. Examples: "If some child pushes you in line what can you do?"; "If you want someone to play with and you are afraid to ask..." Teachers encourage children to act out ways that they themselves bring the Golden Rule to school. Children have to generate at least one classroom rule that will make their classroom a place that is respectful and friendly.

Myrna Shure's (1992) ICPS (I Can Problem Solve) curricular training scripts give teachers specific tools to enhance children's ability to generate alternative solutions to solve social conflicts and to think of the consequences of each solution they envision. Was the action that the child chose a good idea or not such a good idea? After three months, aggressive and shy children trained with these daily lessons begin to solve their social problems more positively in the classroom. ICPS teaches children how to coordinate their interactions with peers and adults. Children reflect whether what a classmate wishes to do is the same or different from what they want. A child begins to understand that a playmate may not want to do what he wants to do right now; but may want to do that activity later. Children are taught to find out what another's wishes are by asking, watching, and listening. Reflectivity is the hallmark of the mature student. Teachers who use specific ICPS lesson plans daily increase student reflectivity and classroom harmony.

Developmental Clinical Knowledge

Teachers-in-training will need courses in children's emotional and personal development in order to become familiar with how children's emotional development impacts on early learning. The important and sensitive work of clinicians such as Selma Fraiberg, Stanley Greenspan, Alicia Lieberman, and Jeree Pawl should become part of early teacher training. The National Center for Clinical Infant Programs in the USA provides information about relevant programs and training opportunities for professionals working with young children to promote positive mental health. In my own annual intensive infant/toddler workshop given the last week of June every year, student teachers develop sensitive insights into the emotional world of little ones as well as knowledge about facilitating fine motor, cognitive, and linguistic development in the early years.

Personal knowledge and interpersonal skills. ECE preparation for the future will need to include some specialized intimate topics, which have rarely found their ways into educational methods and materials courses. Specifically, early childhood educators need to understand the intergenerational transmission of secure and insecure attachment patterns of young children with their caregivers, as described in the work of Bowlby, Ainsworth, Mary Main and others (Honig, 1988; 1993).

Coursework on emotional development increases teacher awareness of interaction patterns that promote the early development of aggression and/or prosocial behaviors. Strong anger and emotional disturbance often leads to severe

disruptions of classroom learning. On-hands training opportunities are needed where future caregivers learn to facilitate and promote early cooperation, caring, and altruism. Toddler teachers, particularly, will need to learn how to use this critical period to help toddlers develop a sturdy sense of their own autonomy in conjunction with compassion and empathy for and fairness with others.

Despite the fact that Freudian theory seems "passe" to many modern early childhood specialists, the ECE specialist of the future will surely want to be aware of and alert to Freudian defense mechanisms that are detrimental to early learning. In some families an overly boisterous or a slow-learning child may be "demonized" by adults. The child is scoffed at as clumsy, or slow to catch on, or deliberately "bad". This adult use of the Freudian mechanism of "projection of evil" onto a child is more widespread than one might expect. The early childhood educator of the future must see her or his role as nurturing the emotional/social personhood of the child as well as promoting intellectual learning.

When parents have been overly "pushy", some children will use every defense possible to protect themselves from the intolerable panic of parental overly stringent expectations and pressures. Some parents will "deny reality" by not acknowledging either their own heavy pressures for performance beyond the child's ability or deny their own intrusiveness and sarcastic criticisms. Teachers must be alert to these defense mechanisms. Aware of the emotional lives of children they teach, they will be better able to free some children who are labelled as "Not working up to par" or

branded as "lazy" by their families.

In his work with children with "learning blocks", Bruner (1966) noted that they could not "cope with the demands of school work unless and until they were able to defend themselves against the panic of impulse and anxiety that the demands of schoolwork set off in them (pp. 131-132). Bruner emphasized how critical the tutor is in developing play and playfulness. With tutorial help, learning, which has become highly charged with conflict for some youngsters, slowly becomes an intrinsic pleasure. Some parents have made the "adventure" of learning too dangero us for their children. Their scorn in response to a child's early clumsiness or poor grades due to misunderstanding of lessons paralyzes the child's deep inner drive toward mastery. Teachers of the future must learn to understand children's emotional development so well that they can unfreeze blockages to learning and patterns of avoidance and denial in youngsters. They must give generous doses of admiration for small steps forward and cheerful acceptance of the ups and downs of children's early attempts at mastery. Teachers of the 21st century must create an emotionally safe classroom for children. To further this goal, intimate tutorial work with each child will be as important as working with groups of children.

When emotional learning is valued, teachers of the future will be able to broaden their concept of child "success". Some youngsters will never shine at the basic school skills of reading, writing, and computation. But the emotionally mature teacher will look for all children's gifts. One child may have a flair for dramatic tale

telling; one is able to care for a hurt animal and nurse it back to health; one excels in running or swimming. Another child draws cartoon animals wonderfully well, or tinkers purposefully and ingeniously to fix a broken toy. Each person mysteriously has some special gift. The teacher's gift is the ability to identify, appreciate, and nourish each child's special gifts!

Parenting Courses and Practica with Families

The social lives of children not only in third world, but in industrialized countries too, sometimes reflect dire poverty and lack of adult nurturance in the home. Some children have been abandoned by families and live in peer gangs. Others are required by adults to toil at jobs for long hours, rather than become enrolled in educational learning experiences. In American schools, one child drops out of school every 8 seconds. Many youngsters do attend schools yet are barely literate. Homicide and gang murders are endemic among youth in some poverty communities. The statistics are alarming, but as one expert has observed: " We know how bad things are, [but] we are not sure what to do. We feel overwhelmed by the numbers. The remedies proposed by all the experts are global...but they do not reach into our classrooms" (Wood, 1991, p.3).

Ability to work effectively with families in school and in home settings is a skill necessary for teachers of the next century. Some prekindergarten teachers may even become primarily Home Visitation specialists with skills in reaching both parents and young children. They travel equipped with materials to recreate a model miniature

early childhood classroom in each home during a visit. They model an exemplary teacher role while showing warmth and respect for families. Visiting teachers help families create home-made books and toys. Families who cherish their children can still benefit from teacher expertise in order to create a rich early learning environment at home for their children.

Part of the Home Visitor's role will be to teach about good nutrition, safe hygiene, resources for receiving health care, and positive discipline practices. Baumrind's "Authoritative" parenting style (1977) can be taught during casual homey conversations with parents. Rather than using overly permissive or highly authoritarian ways, authoritative parents provide high expectations, unconditional love and regard, clear rules with reasons, firm discipline, and genuine interest in their children as individual persons.

Increased efforts at parent involvement are necessary - and difficult!

Parent involving in ECE can sometimes be a hard job. See Honig (1979) for an in-depth discussion of pitfalls and frustrations in trying to involve parents in their children's early education. As elementary school teachers know only too well, often just the families the teacher wants so much to meet and get to know may not come to regular programmed school events. Yet energetic and optimistic teachers are ingenious. Some are adept at galvanizing young children to create invitations for their own parents. The enthusiasm of young children in the classroom often motivates their parents to participate in special parent evening programs planned for parents within the early

childhood education facility. Luring parents in for a one-time visit is not enough. Teacher training institutions will have to institute courses to increase ECE teachers's skills in working with multicultural families and parents from different ethnic groups, just as, at present, training is offered in multicultural sensitivity for personnel working with young children (Derman-Sparks & the A.B.C Task Force, 1989).

Parent empowerment helps. Parents become involved in a school program if their expertise is valued. One parent creates a paper-mache Pinata for a birthday party. Another knows how to work a shadow puppet. One teaches special songs. Another involves the children in a special woodworking or cooking experience. Grandparents tell tales of long ago to the class. Each contribution is welcomed and appreciated as an intrinsic aspect of an excellent preschool curriculum.

Internships with families provide hands-on experience for teachers in training. They learn how to apply family systems ideas and how to work with families in a supportive rather than adversarial role. ECE students are routinely required to complete practica in prekindergarten classrooms. But each student can also be assigned to work with a family under stress - such as a teen mom, or a family in a shelter for abused parents, or a family with a seriously disabled youngster, or a family with an unhappy precocious youngster who is reading fluently above his class level and feels lonely because few playmates share his or her abilities and interests. Well-supervised internships and practica with families go far toward ensuring more sensitivity in later involvement with parents of young children in the classroom.

Because the foundations for later learning are laid in the early years, a wider variety of preparation is needed for ECE specialists than for in-classroom teachers at higher grade levels. Indeed, the "kitchen therapists" that Selma Fraiberg (Fraiberg, 1988) so eloquently describes in her work with parents of babies at risk for developmental failure to thrive, not only are trained in family therapy but are also providers of early childhood information and skills as they slowly gain the basic trust of parents they serve. They demonstrate and teach inappropriate, abusive, neglectful and disturbed parents those early childhood practices that will ensure optimal rather than distorted patterns of infant and preschool growth and the optimal accomplishment of socioemotional, linguistic, cognitive and other tasks. Teachers can choose to form liaisons with mental health agency personnel in cases where home disturbance threatens the young child's positive development.

Theories of Child Development

A course on child development theories is essential and currently available to many caregivers in training. But theory courses must comfortably present theories so that teachers in training do not feel bewildered by the variety of theories and contradictions between some child development theories. Teachers of the future need courses that help them use theories to gain more insights into the problems and personalities of each child.

Challenge teachers to grasp the implications of theoretical ideas! Challenge teachers to mix and match theorists' ideas in order to understand preschoolers more

insightfully. It is not enough for a caregiver to spew back on a test that "babies between 12 and 18 months are in Piaget's stage of 'tertiary circular reactions'! A student teacher needs to get that "Aha!" insight. Coursework should help the future teacher, for example, know Mahler's "rapprochement" period in conjunction with Erikson's Stages 2 and 3, (when toddlers and preschoolers struggle to coordinate their wills with others for mastery and responsible choices rather than absorb a lasting legacy of shame, doubt, rage, and guilt). Combined with a good grasp of Piaget's sensorimotor Stage 5, the teacher suddenly understands that toddlers' seemingly "naughty" behaviors reflects how hard the little ones are working to make sense of their world. They do want to grow up and move into the preschool period with more self assurance and independence, yet they are partly still longing for adults to nurture and care for them as if they were still babies. How difficult are the child's tasks during this see-sawing, difficult period! How many adults understand what is truly going on during this "What will happen IF?" period? A toddler launches into glorious if unorthodox experimentation with materials. She smears mama's lipstick all over a mirror; he mixes papa's shaving cream in a finger painting mess on the floor! Seeing with the inner eye must become the hallmark of a future teacher who will guide the preschooler judiciously through the emotional shoals of toddlerhood to the shores of competent emotional and cognitive learning patterns by elementary school age.

Early childhood educators of the future will serve as front line therapists for the very young. Theorists' ideas will help teachers decode disturbing or inappropriate

behaviors and give insights as to the dialectical struggles that some development pathways entail. Theorists of particular importance include Mahler, Freud and neo-Freudians - such as Erikson and Horney , as well as Bowlby, Ainsworth and attachment theorists, social learning theorists, Piaget and constructivists, reinforcement theorists, and ecological theorists such as Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979), who has so cogently reminded us that children's growth patterns are affected by the family and community settings in which they develop and learn.

Vygotsky. The ideas of Lev Vygotsky (born in 1896 as was Jean Piaget) are particularly crucial for teacher training for the 21st century because, more than Piaget's ideas, they validate the pervasive and fundamental importance of the teacher's role.

Vygotsky discovered that the capability of children with equal levels of mental development differed markedly depending on the teacher's role (Cole et al., 1978). He designated in children:

> The zone of proximal development [that] defines those functions that have not yet matured but are in the process of maturation, functions that will mature tomorrow but are currently in an embryonic state... The actual developmental level characterizes mental development retrospectively, while the zone of proximal development characterizes mental development prospectively. (p.86-87)

Vygotsky recognized that educators are crucial for helping children advance

from their "actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Cole et al, 1978, p. 86).

Piaget. Knowledge of Piagetian stages of development together with infant/toddler expertise will still be necessary components of ECE training. Teachers who work in inclusive programs where special needs children are integrated into the classroom will particularly need to know Piagetian sensorimotor developmental levels and the tasks and gains of each developmental period. Currently, many preschool and kindergarten teachers focus on understanding the preoperational thinking that characterizes most preschoolers and kindergartners. Yet, toddlers and some preschoolers are still functioning somewhat at sensorimotor levels. Behavior that may be seen as "foolish" or "disobedient", such as unpeeling collage pieces from the large paper she pasted them on, may be due to the fact that object permanence is not yet completely established and the young child is curious to find out if the paste is still there!

Language Development

More than thirty years ago, Dr. Jerome Bruner (1966) reflected that:

It is more than a little troubling to me that so many of our students dislike two of the major tools of thought - mathematics and the conscious deployment of their native language in its written form, both of them devices for ordering thoughts about things and thoughts about thoughts. I should hope that in the

new era that lies ahead we will give a proper consideration to making these tools more lovable. (p. 112)

Knowledge and expertise about the early milestones and windows of normal language development is an important cornerstone for training early childhood teachers for the 21st century. Knowledge about the subtle relationship between the domains of language and cognition and the ways they nourish each other's developmental advances is important for ECE personnel. Not everywhere do families read to their young children, hold extensive conversations at mealtimes, or listen and respond with genuine focused interest as a preschooler tries to explain something to or ask questions of an adult.

The glory of language richness, language beauty, and language power must become the heritage of all young children. Teachers will need specific suggestions about how to immerse language learning experiences within daily routines (Honig, 1989). Caregivers need to know how to use Socratic questions (a la Sigel's distancing hypothesis) as well as convergent questions judiciously, how to choose books and read with expressiveness, how to tell stories to enchant children, how to hold sustained turn-taking conversations during walks and during circle times, and how to draw out animated child talk at lunch time. Seasoned teachers encourage early language attempts from baby's cooing turns to book creation and skits produced by older preschoolers (Honig, 1982).

Practica with parents provide opportunities for student teachers to work

together with families to evoke early language receptive and expressive powers and rich love of books, songs, chants, reading, and reasoning (Honig, 1985; 1989).

Help teachers develop book-lending libraries for families. Help them to scrounge materials so even poor families can create picture books to use with their little ones. Daily story reading by teachers may have the power to awake but not sustain a passion for books. Family participation as nurtured by caregivers may provide that special spark (Honig & Brophy, 1996).

Aesthetics

Promoting beauty and appreciation for dance, classical music, poetic rhythms, and painting should be as important a component for teacher training as creative language arts with children. The ECE specialist needs to learn to awaken in young children an early love of art, natural wonders, hand-made crafts, flowers and gardens, poetry, classical music, drama, dance and pantomime, and other aesthetic pleasures. Specific promotion of aesthetics has two major positive results: 1) to nourish each child' own gifts and delight in the arts, and 2) "to counteract children's overwhelming immersion in the endemic commercialism of color, design, and merchandise messages that television advertising promotes" (Honig, 1996, p. 142).

Many schools actively support sports and games for children. But body grace in moving to music, in harmonious dance and rhythmic movement with peers, needs to be stressed even more with young children (Honig, 1990). Skill development within a non-punitive atmosphere will ensure that even tense or uncoordinated children have

opportunities to learn graceful movements without feeling crushed self-esteem in comparison with peers whose motoric prowess on the playing field is far superior. Many peoples already have an ancient history of appreciation for dance and bodily movement, music and the plastic arts within their rich cultural and religious ceremonial heritage.

Diversity : Gender and Culture

As technology advances, increased communication between countries and cultures will impact on caregivers around the world. Coursework on differences in cultural patterns of childrearing and in treatment of children as a function of gender will empower teachers to become more aware of ethnic and gender differences and similarities. In countries that include a variety of ethnic groups, such a course must affirm teachers' acceptance of each child who comes into the classroom. Some cultural patterns facilitate early learning more than others do for young children. Some patterns of belief, ritual, custom and the value of education for male and female children differ greatly. The challenge for the teacher in the 21st century will be to strive professionally to help each child to learn, despite the fact that a child may come from a caste or gender group that has been previously undervalued. This is a challenge of major proportions and reinforces the crucial nature of professional preparation for early childhood educators of the 21st century.

Gender is a topic rarely taught to teachers in training. Yet, some families promote education mostly for males.This deprives the world of a precious resource -

well-educated female children. Coursework for teachers should include exploration of the formation of gender identity, gender constancy, and the powerful role of the media and peer cultures in maintaining sex role stereotypes despite the best efforts of educators and parents to raise children in more egalitarian fashion. Teachers of the future will promote early learning for girls and boys treasured equally as valuable future citizens (Honig, 1983).

Risk Factors and Disabilities

Early childhood classrooms of the future will more and more provide integrated and inclusive settings for children. Caregivers therefore need to experience practica with youngsters who require special assistance in becoming fully included members of the ECE environment. Caregivers broaden their skills as they work with children with disabilities as well as with typical youngsters.

Classroom Collaborations and Team Work

Principals and staff, teachers and parents, caregivers and children - all must learn to work together harmoniously toward living and learning goals to optimize children's chances for success in school of the future. Creating a democratic classroom climate assists children to learn self-regulation of conduct and self-monitoring of learning goals. Kohlberg (Kohlberg & Candee, 1984) pioneered the creation of schools as "just communities" where students and teachers working and reasoning together become capable of ethical and moral responsibility within the school.

Creation of a climate of teamwork includes promotion of decision making skills even among preschoolers. Very young children can start participating in circle time discussions about working peaceably together and adhering to rules of conduct (Dreikurs, Grunwald, & Pepper, 1982; Nelson, 1988). Dr. Thomas Gordon's (1974) pioneer work describing transactional analysis tools for classroom teachers is a valuable resource for teachers in creating classroom climates where ethical considerations and courtesies in interactions become established.

Ethical issues arise in classrooms also when teachers note any suspicious signs of child abuse. Teachers are bound to report such signs of violence. Sensitivity to ethical issues needs to be embedded in the coursework for training teachers for the future (Katz & Ward, 1990).

## Conclusions

The future training of early childhood specialists rests on the pioneer work of perceptive and passionately caring child development specialists of today. But the role of the caregiver in the future will require ever more professional skills. Visions for the future of early childhood education described above will remain just that - visions- unless political and economic supports for professional training are put into place. The judicious use of media (radio broadcasts, wall posters, and newspaper articles, for example) can help promote the importance of the profession of early childhood educator. Pediatric clinics are an excellent resource where families served can pick up

brochures and information about the importance of early childhood education for their children. Training collaborations between agencies and schools of higher education can ensure more intensive and extensive preparations for caregivers of the future. Respect and honor for the work of rearing young children to become the best persons and the best learners they can become actually undergirds the future fate of early childhood teacher training. When citizens across the world join in this respect, then they will enthusiastically support the importance of teacher training. Let us promote proudly the importance of quality caregiving and teaching, so that together as partners with parents, we ensure optimal development and education for all our children.

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